

Wed., May 13, 2008

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, in recognition of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-05) spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Earlier this year, she recorded her oral history for the United States Capitol Historical Society.

The Historical Society and the Heritage Series LLC have joined together to create an oral history series featuring six current and former Asian Pacific American Members of Congress.

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In the oral history series, titled "Yielding the Floor: Reflections of Asian Pacific Americans in the Nation's Capitol," Congresswoman Matsui recounts her own personal experiences growing up as an American of Japanese descent.

"I believe strongly in the art of storytelling, and the importance of remembering our past as we look to the future. Growing up, I was taught American values; to work hard and pursue my goals. In telling my story, I hope that people will see that the experience of a Japanese American is really the American experience," said Rep. Matsui.

This year, Rep. Matsui was proud to co-sponsor the [House Resolution](#) honoring Asian Pacific Heritage Month. She also honored five local Asian Americans that were recognized for their commitment to improving the Sacramento community; her resolution in honor of them can be found by [clicking here](#).

Below is the statement delivered by Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui on the House floor:

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate May as Asian Pacific American Heritage

Month.

There are more than 15 million Asian Americans living in the United States. From the early Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino immigrants to recent Vietnamese, Laotian and Hmong Communities, the United States has benefited in many ways from the contributions of these diverse cultures.

Through the telling of the Asian Pacific American experience, we illuminate the equality of opportunity that makes our country the wonderful place it is today. From community involvement...to business entrepreneurship...many Americans of Asian descent came to this country with very little and have been able to achieve the American dream.

Asian Americans have also played a critical role in protecting our freedoms. During World War II, the Federal Government chose to intern 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent, including my mother and father and their entire families. The country learned the importance of balancing civil liberties with our national security. And today, more than ever, we must be aware of the significance of this fine balance.

I am proud to honor the courageous Americans who fight against injustice...and recognize the strength and vibrancy of our country.

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